

arguments with respect to claims 1-27 have been considered but are not persuasive. In particular, the Examiner stated that "Bourdon clearly shows a resilient seal (retainer) 40 providing an ungapped condition between the seal and the contact member in order to prevent any unwanted material getting into the contact portion." The Examiner's above statement exhibits a clear misunderstanding of the teachings of Bourdon and invention recited in the claims of the present application.

Independent claims 1 and 22 of the present application recite an electrical connector having, *inter alia*, a dielectric housing having a plurality of substantially open receptacles arranged in an array, a plurality of electrically conductive contacts positioned within at least some of said receptacles, a plurality of retention members within the receptacle, at least one of said retention members engaging at least one of said contacts so as to impart an ungapped condition to the connector at the location of the retention member within the housing.

Bourdon et al. discloses an electrical connector with insertable and removable contacts. Specifically, Bourdon et al. discloses a connector 1 having one (Fig. 10) or two (Fig. 1) contact inserts 10. The contact insert has a plurality of passages 15 for receiving contacts 20 therein. Each of the passages has a plurality of retention fingers 11 integral with the insert 10 for retaining the contacts 20 to the insert 10. The connector also includes a front moisture sealing grommet 30 and a rear moisture sealing grommet 40. ***The retention fingers 11 do not create an ungapped condition to the connector. Rather, in order to create an ungapped condition, a forward moisture sealing grommet 40 and a rear moisture sealing grommet 30 is required.*** However, the grommets 30 and 40 are not retention members, which means that the ungapped condition is not at the position of the position of the retention members. Rather, as clearly recited in the specification and disclosed in the figures of Bourdon, the retention fingers 11 retain the contacts 20 within the housing of Bourdon. The front and rear moisture sealing grommets 30, 40 are used to keep moisture out of the connector; they do not perform a retention function as this is accomplished with the retention fingers 11. Thus, as stated above and in the prior office action response, Bourdon et al. does not disclose, teach or suggest, *inter alia*, an electrical connector having "retention members engaging at least one of said contacts so as to impart an

ungapped condition to the connector at the location of the retention member within the housing.” Accordingly, applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of independent claims 1 and 22 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bourdon et al. for at least the above reason. As claims 2-21 and 23-27 are ultimately dependent on either independent claim 1 or 22, claims 2-21 and 23-27 are likewise not unpatentable over Bourdon et al. for at least the above reason. Accordingly, applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of claims 2-21 and 23-27 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bourdon et al.

The Examiner also made the following prior art of record, but did not rely upon it: United States Patent No. 5,334,032 (“Myers et al.”), United States Patent No. 4,605,272 (“Myers et al.”), United States Patent No. 3,840,841 (“Clark”) and United States Patent No. 3,845,452 (“Eifler”). These references, whether taken alone or in combination, do not disclose, teach or suggest the subject matter claimed by the applicant.

Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider the rejections in light of the above remarks, and allowance of all pending claims is respectfully requested. Should the Examiner believe that a telephone conversation would facilitate prosecution of the present application, the Examiner is invited to call Applicant’s attorney.

Respectfully submitted,
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